

Judges

Failures, Deliverance, Sin



“In those days there was no king in Israel;
everyone did what was right in his own eyes”
(Judges 21:25)

David Padfield
www.padfield.com

Outline Of Judges

Part One: Failure To Complete The Conquest (1:1—3:4)

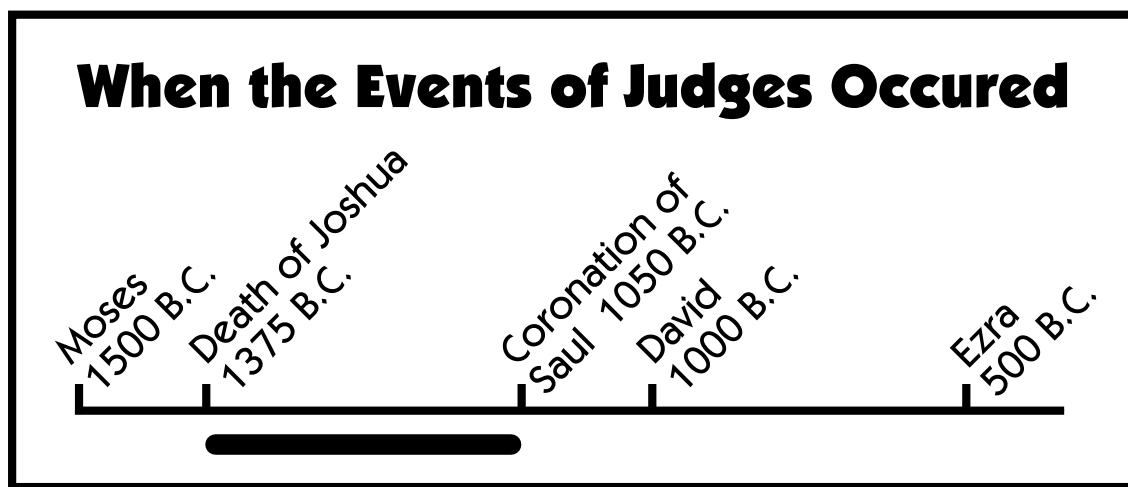
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| II. | Judgment Of God For Their Failures | 2:1—3:4 |

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The Book Of Judges

I. FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE CONQUEST (1:1—3:4)

A. The Failures Of Israel (1:1–36)

1. What was Israel's first task after the death of Joshua?
2. Who was assigned to this great task?
3. What happened to Adoni-Bezek? Why?
4. What did Caleb offer to the one who captured Kirjath Sepher?
5. What was the significance of Caleb capturing Hebron and driving out the three sons of Anak?
6. What did the tribes of Manasseh, Ephraim, Zebulun, Asher, and Naphtali fail to do?

B. Judgment Of God For Their Failures (2:1—3:4)

1. What was the consequence of Israel's failure to drive out the Canaanites?

2. How were the people in the days of Joshua characterized?
3. Explain the phrase “gathered to their fathers” in Judges 2:10.
4. What great evil did the next generation in Israel perform?
5. How did God punish them for this evil?
6. Why did God raise up judges for the people?
7. What happened after a judge died?
8. What five “lords” were left in Israel?

II. SEVEN CAMPAIGNS OF ISRAEL (3:5—16:31)

A. Southern Campaign: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar (3:5–31)

1. What sin did Israel commit in their marriages?
2. Whom did God raise up to save Israel from Cushan-Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia?

3. Whom did God raise up to save Israel from Eglon, king of Moab?

4. What “secret message” did Ehud have for the king?

5. What great act did Shamgar perform?

B. Northern Campaign: Deborah, Barak (4:1—5:31)

1. Why were the children of Israel scared of Jabin?

2. What is Deborah best known for?

3. How did God subdue Jabin?

4. Where would men and women “recount the righteous acts of the Lord”?

5. Who was the “most blessed among women”?

C. Central Campaign: Gideon, Abimelech, Tola, Jair (6:1—10:5)

1. How did the Midianites oppress Israel? Why?

2. Why was Gideon “threshing wheat in the winepress”?
3. What great question did Gideon ask the Angel of the Lord?
4. How did Gideon show his humility?
5. What sign was performed for the benefit of Gideon?
6. What did Gideon do to the altars of Baal?
7. What was the second sign performed for the benefit of Gideon?
8. Why did God tell Gideon to thin his army out? How did Gideon do this at first?
9. What was the second way Gideon thinned the army?
10. What was the cry of the army of Israel as they attacked?
11. Why were the men of Ephraim angry?

12. What could be said about the end of Gideon's life?
13. What did Abimelech do with a group of "worthless and reckless men"?
14. Explain the parable of the trees that Jotham told.
15. Why did God send a "spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem"?
16. What happened to Gaal, the son of Ebed?
17. How did Abimelech die?
18. How long did Tola judge Israel? Where did he live?
19. How long did Jair judge Israel? How big was his family?

D. Eastern Campaign: Jephthah (10:6—12:7)

1. In what way did the children of Israel sin against God?. Who was sold "into the hands of the Philistines" and "the people of Ammon"?

2. Who was sold “into the hands of the Philistines” and “the people of Ammon”?
3. Where did God tell the Israelites to direct their complaints?
4. How was Jephthah the Gileadite described?
5. What did the men of Israel offer Jephthah?
6. Summarize the speech that Jephthah made to the people of Ammon.
7. What vow did Jephthah make to God?
8. What new custom did the daughters of Israel start observing?
9. What is the significance of the word “Shibboleth”?

E. Second Northern Campaign: Ibzan, Elon, Abdon (12:8–15)

1. Describe the family of Izban.

2. What do we know about Elon?

3. What do we know about Abdon?

F. Western Campaign: Samson (13:1—16:31)

1. What is a “Nazirite”?

2. What did Manoah say in his prayer?

3. What did the Angel of the Lord say to Manoah?

4. How did Manoah’s wife know that God did not want to kill them?

5. What part did providence play in the selection of a Philistine woman for Samson?

6. What riddle was posed by Samson?

7. How and where did Samson get the changes of garments to pay off his debt?

8. How did Samson destroy the crops of the Philistines?

9. What did Samson make the men of Judah promise?

10. How did Samson use the jawbone of the donkey?

11. How did the Gazites plan to kill Samson?

12. What did the lords of the Philistines want Delilah to do?

13. How did Samson “mock” Delilah?

14. Why did Delilah cut off Samson’s hair?

15. What did the Philistines do to Samson?

16. What happened at the temple of Dagon?

III. ISRAEL CONFORMS TO HER SURROUNDINGS (17:1—21:25)

A. Israel Conforms Through Idolatry (17:1—18:31)

1. What did Micah set up in his house?
2. What did Micah offer to the Levite?
3. What was the tribe of Dan seeking?
4. Why did the men of Dan set up a “carved image”?

B. Israel Conforms Through Immorality (19:1–30)

1. What sin did the concubine of the Levite commit?
2. Why did the Levite stay so long at the house of his father-in-law?
3. Why didn't the Levite want to stay in Jebus? Where did he want to spend the night?
4. What happened in the city of Gibeah?

5. What did the Levite do when he got home? Why?

C. Sinning Through Civil War (20:1—21:25)

1. Where did the children of Israel gather to discuss their problem?

2. What did the children of Israel promise?

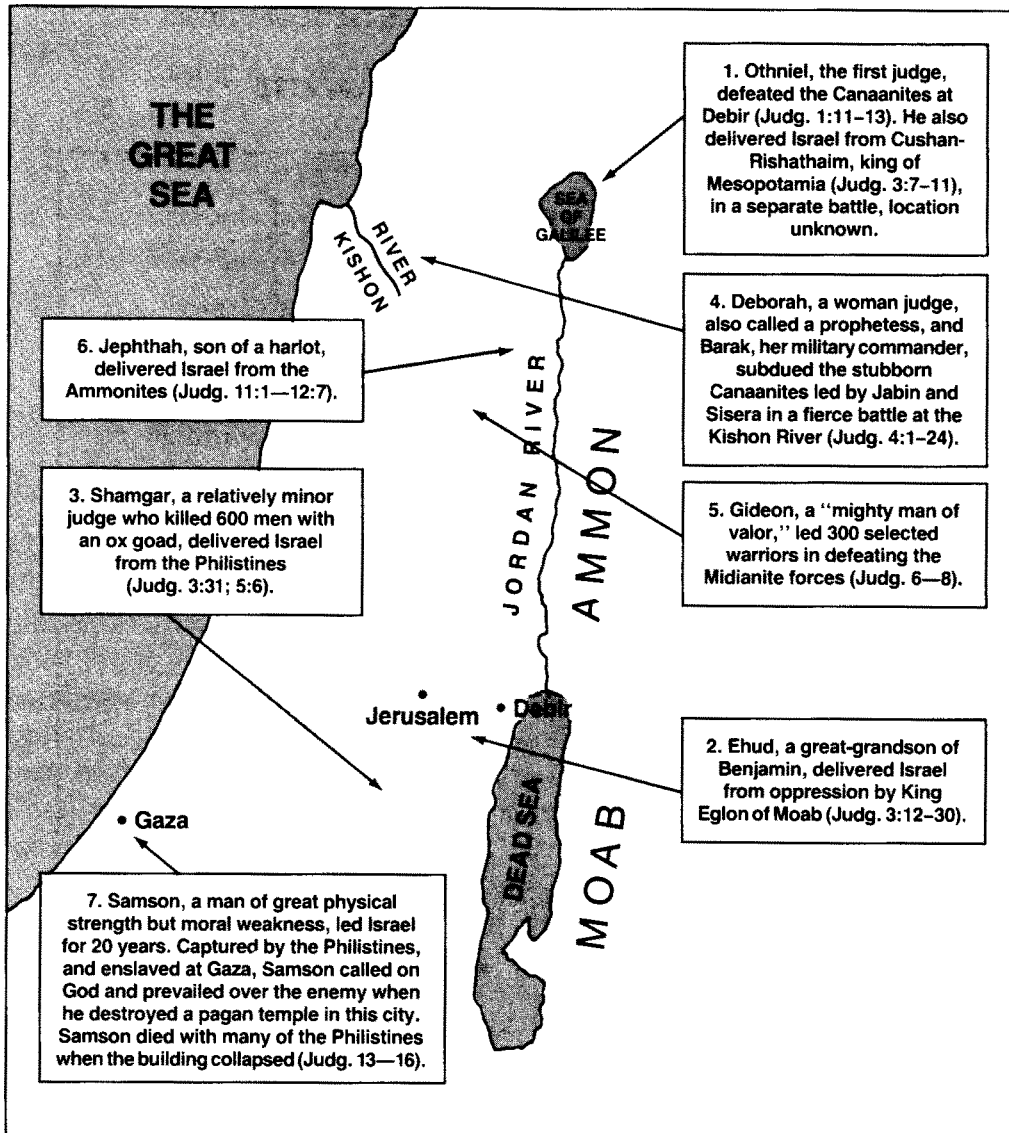
3. What special skill did 700 select soldiers have?

4. What tribe went to war against Benjamin?

5. Why did the men of Benjamin panic?

6. What oath did the men of Israel make at Mizpah?

7. What was going to keep the tribe of Benjamin from becoming extinct?



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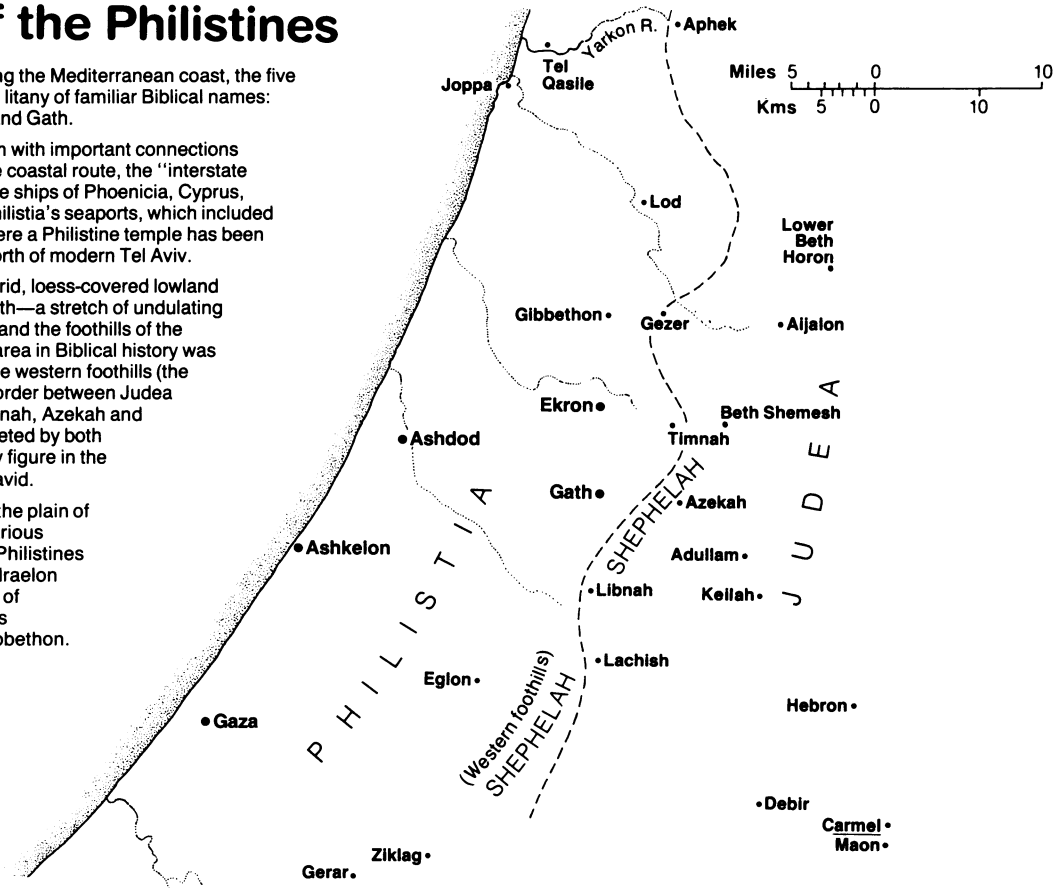
Five Cities of the Philistines

Like a string of opulent pearls along the Mediterranean coast, the five cities of the Philistines comprise a litany of familiar Biblical names: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron and Gath.

Each was a commercial emporium with important connections reaching as far as Egypt along the coastal route, the "interstate highway" of the ancient world. The ships of Phoenicia, Cyprus, Crete and the Aegean called at Philistia's seaports, which included a site today called Tell Qasile, where a Philistine temple has been found, on the Yarkon River just north of modern Tel Aviv.

The Philistine plain itself was an arid, loess-covered lowland bordering on the desert to the south—a stretch of undulating sand dunes adjacent to the sea—and the foothills of the Judahite plateau on the east. No area in Biblical history was more frequently contested than the western foothills (the Shephelah region), lying on the border between Judah and Philistia. Beth Shemesh, Timnah, Azekah and Ziklag were among the towns coveted by both Israelites and Philistines, and they figure in the stories of Samson, Goliath and David.

The area to the north of Philistia, the plain of Sharon, was also contested at various periods: During Saul's reign the Philistines even held Beth Shan and the Esdraelon valley. Later, from about the time of Baasha on, a long border war was conducted by the Israelites at Gibbethon. Originally a part of Judah's tribal allotment, the coastal area was never totally wrested away from the Philistines who may have begun their occupation as early as the time of Abraham.



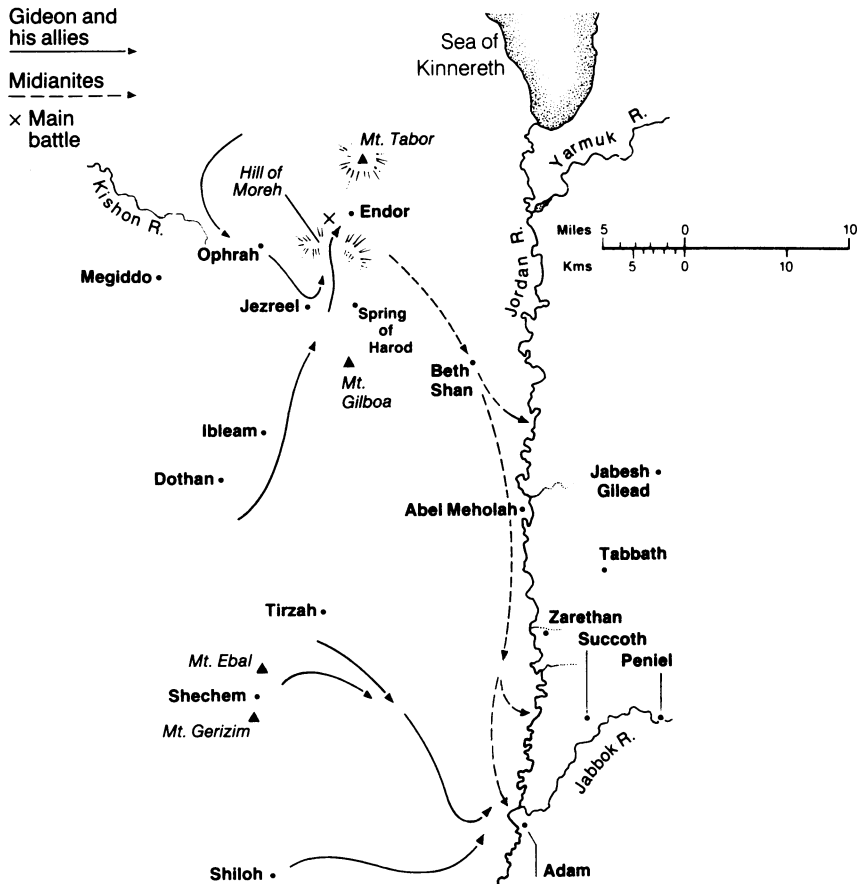
Gideon's Battles

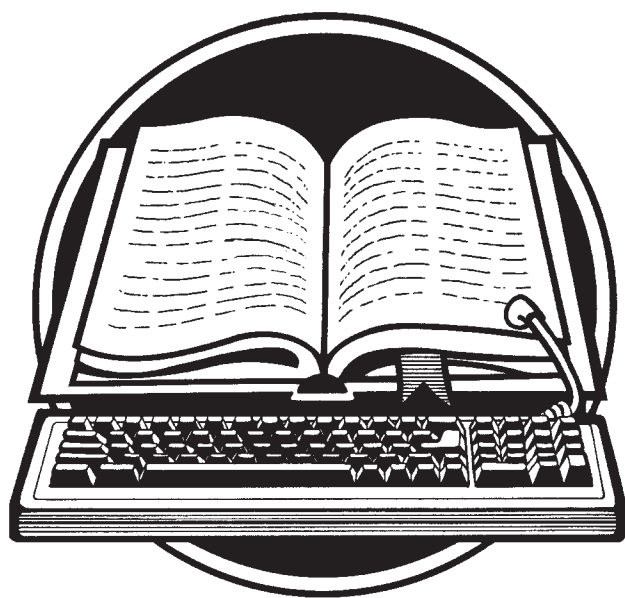
The story of Gideon begins with a graphic portrayal of one of the most striking facts of life in the Fertile Crescent: the periodic migration of nomadic people from the Aramean desert into the settled areas of Palestine. Each spring the tents of the *bedouin* herdsmen appear overnight almost as if by magic, scattered on the hills and fields of the farming districts. Conflict between these two ways of life (herdsmen and farmers) was inevitable.

In the Biblical period, the vast numbers and warlike practice of the herdsmen reduced the village people to near vassalage. Gideon's answer was twofold: (1) religious reform, starting with his own family; and (2) military action, based on a coalition of northern Israelite tribes. The location of Gideon's hometown, "Ophrah of the Abiezrites," is not known with certainty, but probably was ancient Aper (modern Afula) in the Valley of Jezreel.

The battle at the spring of Harod is justly celebrated for its strategic brilliance. Denied the use of the only local water source, the Midianites camped in the valley and fell victim to the small band of Israelites, who attacked them from the heights of the hill of Moreh.

The main battle took place north of the hill near the village of Endor at the foot of Mount Tabor. Fleeing by way of the Jordan Valley, the Midianites were trapped when the Ephraimites seized the fords of the Jordan from below Beth Shan to Beth Barah near Adam.





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